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ABSTRACT

A study investigated beliefs about language learning held by American adult students of Arabic studying in two programs, one in Morocco and one in Yemen, and compared them with beliefs held by the teachers. Subjects were 44 students and 10 teachers from the Morocco program and 27 students and 7 teachers from the Yemen program. Subjects were surveyed on the first day of classes, before placement tests were conducted. Some demographic differences were found in the two program populations. Survey questions concerned language learning strategies and patterns, personal motivation for language learning, language aptitude, and the nature of language learning. Results indicate that the student and teachers did hold differing beliefs about language learning. Implications for classroom instruction, curriculum design, and evaluation are explored. The questionnaire is appended. Contains 39 references. (MSE)

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OVERSEAS STUDENTS OF ARABIC AND THEIR TEACHERS: ISSUES IN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

This paper investigates the beliefs about language learning held by adult students who are studying Arabic abroad. Based in part upon the research design and instrument of Elaine Horwitz (University of Texas-Austin), this paper includes the results from students and their teachers in Morocco and in Yemen. This research identifies students' and their respective teacher's most strongly rated and significantly different beliefs. The analysis also includes data concerning the educational administration of two programs of Arabic instruction.

Findings of this study provide strong evidence that, in the case of this sample, students of Arabic and their teachers do hold beliefs concerning language learning that differ. These results may influence instruction techniques, curriculum design, and evaluations. Moreover, these results may illustrate how the manifestation of beliefs about language learning occurs for students and their "native-speaking" teachers in an abroad program.

Recent research (RP-ALLA'95) reports mixed results for U.S. students who enroll in overseas language programs. Some students appear to acquire language faster from studying abroad than for equal time studying in the United States. However, evidence from other U.S. research on students' overseas studies has shown that in-country instruction is not necessarily beneficial or even better than instruction in the United States (Frye & Garza, 1993; Hill, 1986; Milleret, 1990; McNamara & Harris, 1997; Wilkinson, 1995). Frequently, overseas students live with other English-speakers in dormitories or apartments and have goals other than language learning. Thus, they may not benefit from the intended language immersion. Scholars (Brecht et al., 1993; Day, 1987) suggest that overseas study may be preferable to U.S. instruction (class only) for advanced students, particularly in the case of students of the less commonly taught languages (LCTL).[1]

Another set of related research (Freed, 1995; Laubscher, 1994) suggests that the "native" teachers may not necessarily be as well trained in language instruction as are the U.S. teachers. Likewise, overseas program may not contain the academic rigor, cultural needs, and proficiency assessments often necessary for graduate research or federal funding (Gordon, 1987).

In an effort to probe a part of these issues, this research examines beliefs held by overseas students and their "native"

teachers of Arabic (LCTL). It identifies certain priorities in students and teachers' beliefs, describes effects that these beliefs may have on the teachers' language instruction, and speculates the impact of their education and socialization upon their instructional strategies. The study sampled students enrolled in Arabic at a language institution in Morocco and in Yemen (Appendix - A). The *Kuntz-Rifkin Instrument* (KRI) utilized in this survey is expanded from Horwitz's (1988) *Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory* (see Appendix - B). The research questions are:

1. What are the strongly rated statements about language learning for students of Arabic overseas?
2. What are the strongly rated statements about language learning for teachers of Arabic as a second language?
3. What are the strongly rated statements about language learning for both teachers and students of Arabic?
4. What are the significant differences in statement responses between students and their teachers of Arabic?

This article describes belief theory, summarizes the instructional situation for each sample, outlines the method of research, discusses the results, and ends with implications.

Beliefs and Country Review

The concept of belief emerges from a body of literature that goes back two decades. For the most part, this literature presents students' views about language learning at the post-secondary level. In this case, "beliefs" are defined in this study as notions about language learning that students have acquired before receiving classroom instruction. Such beliefs

reflect confidence in students' ability to learn a language and the procedures necessary to acquire fluency in a language.

Language learning belief research. In the past, foreign language researchers (Horwitz, 1988; Truitt, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992) identified beliefs about language learning held by students of commonly taught languages (CTL - English, French, German, and Spanish). Their results suggest that such assumed beliefs may be erroneous or even detrimental to learning (Horwitz, 1988). However, in the previous studies, these researchers did not examine the significantly different responses for statements as reported by students and their teachers in an immersion setting (overseas). Although Kern (1995) did conduct a small-sample study that compared students of French and their teaching assistants, his data were from one stateside university. Therefore, identifying overseas students' and teachers' beliefs may enable stateside and overseas teachers to devise learning strategies that support or correct beliefs, improve student proficiency, and redesign programs.

Area Studies Centers. The *National Defense Education Act 1958* (NDEA) and later the *Higher Education Act 1965* (HEA) have been the primary incentives designed to increase the national language capacity for U.S. government employment (Bordie, 1960; Thompson, 1970). Administrators of African studies centers (Hayward 1983, Wiley & Dwyer, 1980; Lambert, 1984) have recognized that their programs produce area specialists with ancillary language training and that these specialists "continued

to lack either the will or the means to use these skills efficiently in the service of national economic goals" (Perkins 1979: 139). Moreover, the language policy of the HEA that funds overseas graduate and post-graduate studies rarely seem to benefit undergraduate or pre-collegiate students even though these student may have previous LCTL language instruction.

Heretofore, Arabic language research has rarely addressed student beliefs (Belnap, 1993 & 1987) and has not evaluated teacher beliefs stateside or overseas. Student beliefs about language learning have begun to generate concerns about overseas program design at HEA-funded African Studies Centers (Bay, 1991; Guyer, 1996). The evaluations from students of their language instruction were not entirely positive. The important issue is not the correctness of these student assertions, but rather the way in which their opinions underscore beliefs that may lead them to question aspects (efficiency, excellence, accountability, and equity) of overseas language programs.

Overseas Institutes. This study focuses on two language programs: one in Morocco and one in Yemen (Appendix - A).

Arabic Language Institute of Fez. In 1983, the Arabic Language Institute of Fez (ALIF) became an appendage to the formerly USIS-funded American Language Center in Fez.[2] The institute is situated in a city recognized as an educational and religious center. ALIF offers three- and six-weeks course throughout the year. The ALIF staff teach Modern Standard Arabic

(MSA) and Maghrebi (colloquial). Tutorials are available at an extra cost.

Teachers are salaried employees who receive health and retirement benefits. Most instructors have college degrees in Arabic literature or linguistics. Several instructors also teach Arabic or English in a Fez high school. They have access to ESL materials from colleagues who teach over 1000 students English.

Yemen Language Center. The Yemeni Ministry of Education officially authorized the establishment of the Yemen Language Center (YLC) in March, 1989.[3] The YLC staff teach MSA and Yemeni Arabic (colloquial) to adults including residents in Yemen and visiting students. There are four terms annually lasting from 10-12 weeks and consisting of nine instructional levels. Students may receive a certificate after completing one term.

Typically, instructors teach small classes of three to six students or hold tutorials. All the teachers speak Arabic as their first language and hold a B.A. degree. However, several teachers are from other countries such as Saudi Arabia. The amount of Arabic-language instruction experience varies. For instance, some teachers have worked as language trainers for the U.S. Peace Corps in the 1980s while others have inspected pre-collegiate language programs for the Ministry of Education. They are paid on an hourly basis.

Every five weeks, the staff provide a day-long excursion to a historical site. Students live in YLC hostels where often they speak English as the common language.

Method

The author attended both language programs as a participatory observer. In addition to interviewing administrators, teachers, and sets of students, the author surveyed students and teachers designed to identify language-learning beliefs. The KRI comprised five demographic statements in addition to 47 statements designed in a Likert 5-scale, closed-ended format. This scale measured the strength of student agreement with each statement. For purposes of data analysis, a student choice was equated to numbers as follows:

(a) strongly agree	=	1
(b) agree	=	2
(c) neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	=	3
(d) disagree	=	4
(e) strongly disagree	=	5

The sample comprised 44 students and 10 teachers from the ALIF (a summer program) and 27 students and 7 teachers from the YLC (a semester/academic year program). In October, 1996, the author administered the survey to students on the first day of classes prior to a placement tests at the YLC. At ALIF the author or a staff person administered the survey during the first week of classes. Most students had arrived in Sana'a or Fez several days prior to the program which enabled them to hear Arabic in context. Arabic study at the YLC and ALIF could fulfill most U.S. university undergraduate language requirements.

The demographic data showed some differences (Table 1a and 1b). For example, students who studied at the ALIF tended to be older students perhaps since a summer program might better fit

their academic timetable.[4] At both institution, students from the United States and Europe are placed in the same class. As in other overseas language programs (Chlebek & Coltrinari, 1987; Day, 1987; Frye & Garza, 1993; Hill, 1986), greater numbers of women than men enrolled in these two programs. ALIF teachers who responded tended to be older than those at the YLC which may reflect the ALIF employment contract.

Table 1a Demographic Characteristics for Students of Arabic at the YLC and ALIF

Institutions Sample size	YLC 96 N=27	ALIF 97 N=44
C. Sex (males)	44%	35%
Sex (females)	56%	65%
D. Age (18-22 years)	44%	21%
Age (26+ years)	30%	51%
E. Previous study of ARABIC	92%	67%
F. Previous study of any language	92%	98%
G. Mother tongue English	74%	41%

Table 1b Demographic Characteristics for Teachers of Arabic in Yemen and Morocco

Institutions Years Sample size	YLC 1996 N=10	ALIF 1997 N=7
C. Sex (males)	80%	83%
Sex (females)	20%	17%
D. Age (22-25 years)	44%	0%
Age (30+ years)	22%	86%
E. Previous taught ARABIC	78%	100%
F. Previous taught of any language	100%	100%
G. Mother tongue Arabic	100%	86%
I. Major (education)	50%	33%

Statistical analyses comprised descriptive techniques to match the procedures done by other researchers (Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Truitt, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992). Since this sample size was small, the author planned non-parametric statistics (Wilcoxon 2-sample) to test the hypothesis about differences in responses between students and teachers. The decision point was an $\alpha = 0.05$.

Results

Results from the students and teachers of Arabic at the YLC and the ALIF reveal some differences.

1. *What are the strongly rated statements about language learning for students of Arabic overseas?*

Responses greater than 50% from both institutions yielded polarities within the AGREEMENT and DISAGREEMENT categories. Student responses produced consensus for 24 statements (51% of survey) (Table 2). The strength of the responses varied by sample size and composition. For example, the response received the highest percentage for AGREEMENT was (17) "It is important to repeat and practice a lot" and for DISAGREEMENT was (9) "You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly."

Table 2 Consensus Responses for Statements from Students of ARABIC (> 50%)

Institutions	YLC	ALIF
Year	1996	1997
Sample size	N=27	N=44
AGREEMENT		
17-Important to repeat & practice	100%	98%
11-Better to learn FL in country of FL	100%	86%
1-Child learn FL better than adults	96%	89%
40-Interested in culture of people	96%	90%
46-Plan to travel to country of FL	90%	86%
31-Learning FL to know FL speakers	89%	79%
10-It easier to learn FL2 if learned FL	89%	70%
3-Some FL easier to learn than other	85%	98%
25-Learning FL differs from other subjects	85%	76%
13-Guessing is OK	85%	66%
6-Will learn this FL very well	78%	71%
41-Interested in econ/pol. of country	74%	74%
23-Knowing FL will bring job opportunities	74%	63%
*4-This FL is difficult to learn	70%	86%
34-Everyone can learn a FL	68%	66%
39-This FL will be helpful professionally	67%	71%
2-Some people born with special FL ability	64%	64%
8-Knowledge of FL culture necessary	64%	64%
DISAGREEMENT		
9-Do not speak until correct	100%	89%
35-To read in FL, must know all words	96%	84%
36-To listen in FL, must know all words	92%	81%
26-Learning FL is translating from English	85%	80%
5-FL structured in same way as English	85%	84%
20-Learning FL is learning grammar	73%	74%
43-This FL qualifies me for a fellowship	73%	65%
29-People good in math are not good in FLs	56%	52%

*4 = specific answers

2. *What are the strongly rated statements about language learning for teachers of Arabic as a second language?*

Teacher responses produced consensus for 22 statements (47% of survey) (Table 3). Similar to their students, both sets of teachers responded most strongly to statement (17).

Table 3 Consensus Responses for Statements from Teachers of ARABIC (> 50%)

Location	YLC	ALIF
Year	1996	1997
Sample size	N=10	N=7
AGREEMENT		
17-Important to repeat & practice	100%	100%
40-Interested in culture of people	100%	83%
15-I have a foreign language aptitude	100%	71%
23-Knowing FL will bring job opportunities	100%	57%
27-This FL will help me get a good job	100%	57%
13-Guessing is OK	90%	86%
7-Important to speak with excellent accent	90%	86%
30-People in my country think FL is important	90%	86%
25-Learning FL differs from other subjects	90%	71%
12-Heard FL being spoken, would speak to..	90%	71%
3-Some FL easier to learn than other	90%	57%
6-Will learn this FL very well	80%	86%
21-Practice in the lang. lab. necessary	80%	57%
2-Some people born with special FL ability	80%	57%
39-FL will be helpful professionally	78%	67%
8-Knowledge of FL culture necessary	60%	71%
DISAGREEMENT		
36-To listen in FL, must know all words	90%	100%
35-To read in FL, must know all words	89%	86%
38-Distant ancestors knew this FL	80%	71%
9-Do not speak until correct	80%	100%
18-I feel self-conscious speaking the FL	60%	71%
28-It is easier to R/W than to S/U	56%	71%

3. *What are the strongly rated statements about language learning for both teachers and students of Arabic?*

A comparison of student and teacher responses from the two institutions does show some differences. Fourteen statements from respondents at each institution do not have a consensus. Concerning the YLC, eight statements are unique (Table 4a):

AGREEMENT

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language;
12. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would do up to them so that I could practice speaking the language;
30. People in my country think that it is important to speak a foreign language;
31. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better;
41. I am interested in the politics and/or economic systems of the country where this language is spoken;

DISAGREEMENT

42. I need to fulfill a foreign language requirement for graduation;
43. I need this FL to qualify for a fellowship or funding for my education; and
44. I have friends or relatives who speak it.

Respondents from the ALIF reported the following unique statements (Table 4b):

AGREEMENT

7. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent;
15. I have a foreign language aptitude;
34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language;

DISAGREEMENT

26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English;
29. People who are good in math and science are NOT good at learning foreign languages; and
16. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.

Table 4a Consensus Responses for Statements from Teachers and Students of ARABIC at the YLC (50%)

Location Sample size	Teachers N=10	Students N=27
AGREEMENT		
17-Important to repeat & practice	100%	100%
11-Better to learn FL in country of FL	100%	100%
1-Child learn FL better than adults	100%	96%
40-Interested in culture of people	100%	96%
6-Will learn this FL very well	100%	78%
23-Knowing FL will bring job opportunities	100%	74%
27-Speaking FL well will help to get job	100%	54%
3-Some FL easier to learn than other	90%	85%
25-Learning FL differs from other subjects	90%	85%
12-Heard FL being spoken, would speak to..	90%	78%
30-People of my country think FL is important	90%	67%
13-Guessing is OK	89%	85%
2-Some people born with special FL ability	80%	64%
39-FL will be helpful professionally	78%	67%
31-Learning FL to know FL speakers	70%	89%
8-Knowledge of FL culture necessary	60%	64%
41-Interested in econ/pol. of country	56%	74%
DISAGREEMENT		
36-To listen in FL, must know all words	90%	92%
9-Do not speak until correct	80%	100%
35-To read in FL, must know all words	89%	96%
38-Distant ancestors knew this FL	80%	89%
42-Need to fulfill FL requirement for grad.	67%	80%
43-Need FL to qualify for fellowship	67%	73%
44-Have friend/relatives who speak it	56%	56%

Table 4b Consensus Responses for Statements from Teachers and Students of ARABIC at ALIF (> 50%)

Individual Sample size	Teachers N=7	Students N=44
AGREEMENT		
17-Important to repeat & practice	100%	100%
6-Will learn this FL very well	86%	71%
13-Guessing is OK	86%	66%
7-Important to speak FL with excellent accent	86%	57%
40-Interested in culture of people	83%	95%
25-Learning FL differs from other subjects	71%	76%
8-Knowledge of FL culture necessary	71%	64%
15-I have a foreign language aptitude	71%	55%
39-FL will be helpful professionally	67%	71%
3-Some FL easier to learn than other	57%	98%
34-Everyone can learn a FL	57%	66%
2-Some people born with special FL ability	57%	64%
23-Knowing FL will bring job opportunities	57%	63%
DISAGREEMENT		
9-Do not speak until correct	100%	89%
36-To listen in FL, must know all words	100%	81%
35-To read in FL, must know all words	86%	84%
38-Distant ancestors knew this FL	71%	83%
26-Learning FL is translating from English	71%	80%
29-People good in math are not good in FL	67%	52%
16-Learning a FL is learning vocabulary	57%	51%

3. *Are there significant differences in statement responses between overseas students and their teachers of Arabic?*

Results show that significant differences do exist between overseas students and their "native" teachers (Table 5a & 5b). The comparison by institution produce significant differences for nine or ten responses (19%) by each sample. However, the number of responses with strong agreement or strong disagreement differs as do the statements. Responses from teachers and students at both institutes are consistent in that student responses are significantly stronger than their teachers for agreement and for disagreement:

AGREEMENT

46. I plan to travel to a country where this language is spoken;

DISAGREEMENT

5. The language I am trying to learn/teach is structured in the same way as English.

In the case of the YLC, responses for four statements were actually opposite--agreement for teachers and disagreement for their students:

5. The language I am trying to learn is structured in the same way as English;
19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on;
32. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent; and
20. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.

In contrast to the responses from the YLC sample, students and teachers at the ALIF showed a greater variance of significantly difference within the category DISAGREEMENT:

33. People from my country are good at learning foreign languages.

Table 5a Significant Statements for Students and Teachers of Arabic at YLC (Wilcoxon)

Sample Sample Size		Teachers N=10	Students N=27
			AGREE
10.	It is easier to learn FL2 if learned FL	25.7	15.7
46.	Plan to travel to country of FL	26.4	15.9
			DISAGREE
5.	FL structured in same way as English	8.0	22.0!
15.	I have a foreign language aptitude	9.3	22.0
19.	Mistakes are hard to rid later	9.9	21.8!
9.	Do not speak until correct	12.6	20.8
26.	Learning FL is translating from English	12.0	21.0
27.	This FL will help me get a good job	10.0	27.8
32.	People who speak FL are intelligent	12.5	21.5!
20.	Learning FL is learning grammar	11.3	21.3!

p < 0.05 * = .0001 (negative response)
! responses opposite

Table 5b Significant Statements for Students and Teachers of Arabic at ALIF (Wilcoxon)

Sample Sample Size		Teachers N=7	Students N=44
			AGREE
4.	This FL is difficult to learn	40.3	23.1
11.	Better to learn FL in country of FL	39.3	23.9
31.	Learn FL to get to know its speakers	36.4	23.7
46.	Plan to travel to country of FL	34.5	23.1
			DISAGREE
5.	FL structured in same way as English	12.5	28.1
30.	My country's people think FL is important	12.4	28.2
33.	My people are good FL learners	8.9	28.7*
38.	Distant ancestors knew this FL	15.1	25.6
42.	FL requirement for graduation	10.7	26.0

p < 0.05 * = .0001 (negative response)

Discussion

This section addresses important statements to which the teachers responded strongly and which had significant differences

between the responses from the teachers and students at the two institutions. One strategy is to interpret these difference by examining educational policy in Yemen or Morocco.

Agreement. Responses from students and teachers of Arabic at the YLC and the ALIF showed that they agreed with statements (Tables 4a & 4b). All these respondents, like other adults of the CTLs (Fox, 1993; Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992) and the LCTLs (Kuntz, 1996), reported strongest agreement with (17) "It is important to repeat and ypractice a lot." These adults seem to recognize that "time on task" is critical for learning. Yemeni and Moroccan teachers who may have attended Qur'anic schools (Radi, 1997), where choral drilling and individual recitation of suras are the instructional method, may be very comfortable with requiring multiple repetitions and designing various practice activities. Perfection in oral and written production may be a more important goal than listening, reading, or knowledge of culture.

All the YLC respondents indicated strong agreement with (11) "It is better to learn a FL in the foreign country." In previous studies, adult students of the CTLs (Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992), of the LCTLs (Kuntz, 1996), and TAs of French (Fox, 1993) did not report their highest percentage of agreement for this statement. Since students indicated that they would learn more language abroad, this information may explain why these students may not feel adequately trained even by native-speakers in the United States. Perhaps, to compensate for

a dearth of language materials about the target culture stateside, these students and their teachers recognize that they need to have additional contacts with people and culture in order to better learn Arabic. In addition, teachers in Yemen in contrast to those in Morocco have not had much contact with foreigners nor opportunities to study foreign languages. In secondary Yemeni schools, English is frequently taught by Sudanese, Indians, or Egyptians (Mottahar, 1997; Sa'ad, 1998).

Teachers from the YLC and the ALIF showed a stronger response, in contrast to those of their students, to (6) "I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well." Teachers must have confidence in their own abilities to study and acquire a language. However, these teachers reported different degrees of agreement concerning the future use of a foreign language as evident by (23) "If I get to speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it." In Yemen in contrast to Morocco, male teachers who acquire proficiency in another language most likely will find employment with various development organizations. However, the colonial languages of Morocco (French and Spanish) are standard subjects of the curriculum which results in greater competition for jobs (Ameziane & Lietz, 1983; Angrist & Lavy, 1997; Lavy & Spratt, 1997; Radi, 1997).

Finally, responses from teachers, in contrast to those of their students, showed stronger agreement for (13) "It's okay to guess if you don't know a word in the FL." Teachers who agree

with the use of guessing and who are successful at deriving meaning from unknown words or phrases may believe that guessing is an important language strategy. Teachers can help students make "educated" guesses. In overseas situations, students often find that they must guess meaning as part of their daily activities.

For two statements [(25), (40)], responses showed strong agreement. However, the strength of the responses were reversed such that the responses from the YLC teachers were stronger than those of their students. The reverse occurred for responses from the ALIF teachers and their students. The stronger YLC teacher response for (25) "Learning a FL is different from learning other school subjects" may reflect their experience in over crowded classrooms in pre-collegiate and collegiate institutions. Upon employment at the YLC, the director requires small classes and multiple activities. Teachers accustomed to class lectures about languages may find that oral participation, pair work, daily homework, and weekly quizzes in Arabic demand a different set of teaching strategies and self-discipline not familiar to them in other academic settings. In addition, overseas programs typically provide four hours of daily classes. This schedule can be exhausting particularly when the teacher has other employment and family responsibilities.

The common response to (40) "I am interested in the culture of the people who speak this language" reinforces the current focus on integrating culture into daily lessons (Kramsch, 1993).

However, Wilkinson (1995) recently found that deep structures of culture are rarely addressed in the United States or overseas as previously recommended (Omaggio, 1986). The YLC teachers' responses may reflect their limited knowledge of contemporary Arabic culture and Yemeni history. Before 1994, few Yemenis could travel to the southern area.[5] Heretofore, issues such as cultural intent of statement, strategies for active listening, contextualized materials, and challenged ethnocentric views rarely appear in language classrooms.

Two statements received stronger agreement responses from the teachers of the ALIF, in contrast to those from students and from teachers at the YLC. They were statements (7) "It is important to speak a FL with an excellent accent" and (15) "I have a FL aptitude." These ALIF teachers perhaps realize from their own language instruction and from their life in cosmopolitan Fez that one often can be misunderstood without having a perfect accent. Many of the ALIF teachers spoke Tamazight first, then Maghrebi Arabic, MSA, French, Spanish, and English (Ezzaki, 1993). Colloquial sensitivity particularly for Arabic is critical in communication. Having an overall foreign language aptitude in this country may enhance language learning (Angrist & Lavy, 1997).

Finally, a majority of strong agreement responses (greater than 50%) from YLC teachers showed several additional views:

40. I am interested in the culture of the people who speak this language;
1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a FL; and

Strong agreement with these statements may underscore some of the reasons why these teachers have chosen to work at institutions serving adults. If is still difficult particularly for Yemeni women to obtain a basic education such that they might interact with expatriates living in Yemen (Mottahar, 1997; al-Iriyani, 1987). Many of the YLC teachers do not know English well. They struggle to acquire English as their students do so with Arabic.

A statement that focuses on learning ability, such as (1) "It is easier for children than adults to learn a FL," is in line with findings revealed in other studies (Fox, 1993; Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Truitt, 1995; Yang, 1992). The findings of current research on language acquisition such as brain development and lateralization are fairly common knowledge. However, in Yemen unlike in Morocco, studying a foreign language at any pre-collegiate level is limited.[6]

In addition, teacher support is another influence upon teachers' beliefs which demonstrate difference between the two institutions. Teachers in Morocco participate in a strong teachers union and those from ALIF may attend (are expected to attend) annual meetings at any of the seven American Language Centers.[7] The union provides lectures and workshops to supplement those arranged by the ALIF. Moroccan teachers also had a discount card for educational-related purchases. In Yemen, the ESL teachers at the British Council, USIS, and the University of Sana'a among other organizations were discussing the idea of a Yemeni Language Teachers Association in late 1996.

Disagreement. Responses from these students and teachers of Arabic showed common disagreement for four statements (Table 4a & 4b). The statements yielding the highest percentage of disagreement was (9) "You shouldn't say anything in the FL until you can say it correctly" and (36) "In order to listen to something in a foreign language, you have to know all the words." The responses from these students along with their teachers do not appear to indicate a frustration in not knowing all vocabulary--(36). Recently, teachers have developed strategies to help students learn how to listen for different purposes. Respondents at both institutions appear to recognize that speaking Arabic contains elements of risk; however, it is only by speaking and listening that students will learn the subtleties of oral production.

In contrast to the responses from the ALIF respondents, the responses from the students and teachers at the YLC showed consensus to disagree on three additional statements:

42. I need to fulfill a foreign language requirement for graduation;
43. I need this FL to qualify for a fellowship or funding for my education; and
44. I have friends or relatives who speak it.

Yemeni teachers have had limited opportunities to continue their own language studies. Few government initiatives support language learning either as a secondary school graduation requirement or as a criterion for educational funding. In fact, in 1998, the budget of the Ministry of Education was cut (Sa'ad, 1998). Although more than 52% of the population is younger than

18 years, the Ministry appears unable to keep up with the exploding need for basic education, trained administrators, and buildings (Mottahar, 1997).

In contrast to YLC responses, students and their ALIF teachers strongly disagreed with:

26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English;
29. People who are good in math and science are NOT good at learning foreign languages; and
16. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.

These responses may be a consequence of the older students and teachers' experience in language learning. In contrast to younger YLC teachers, ALIF teachers demonstrate their native level of MSA by strongly disagreeing with methodologies that emphasize translation and vocabulary list.

ALIF respondents disagree with statement (26) "Learning a FL is mostly a matter of translating from English." In the case of Arabic, the various diglossia confound the process of translation (Abachi, 1988). They seek proficiency in speaking and writing (productive skills) and in listening and reading (receptive skills) for themselves and their students (al-Batal, 1995; Alosh 1992; Amayreh, 1985)."

Significant statements. The statistically different responses between students and their teachers may reflect the amount of contact with instructors and other native-speakers of Arabic have with foreigners.

Responses from ALIF teachers to statement (30) "People from my country (i.e., Moroccans) think that it is important to speak

a foreign language" yielded the greatest statistical difference. At the secondary school level, Moroccans study and take their baccalaureat examination in English, French, and Spanish in addition to MSA (Ameziane & Lietz, 1983; Radi, 1997). Although students at ALIF may have studied several languages, in most U.S. states, educational administrators do not require students at the secondary level to enroll in a foreign language nor sit for a graduation examination. Only recently have colleges and universities reinstated a language admission requirement in some divisions.

Students of Arabic at both locations indicate a strong aspiration to travel -- (46) "I plan to travel to a country where this language is spoken." Teachers from both countries would find travel to a target language country very expensive. Family responsibilities would preclude educational travel. In the case of Morocco, teachers have many opportunities in the metropolitan areas or at one of the 13 universities to interact with "native" speakers of various languages.' Consequently, teachers may not have the motivation that student do to know how to interpret appropriately what they experience and how to interact with experiences that are important and relevant to the target-language culture.

In addition, students from the YLC, unlike their counterparts at the ALIF, indicated stronger disagreement than do their teachers concerning error correction as shown by (19) "If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be

hard to get rid of them later on." Perhaps, teachers with limited language learning experience fear that their students' error might become permanent. Because Sana'nians are aware of the YLC program, teachers may fear for their reputation if their students make errors speaking while conducting daily activities.

Current language acquisition research corroborate most of these findings. By collaborating with scholars and publishers of the Arabic concerning curriculum and instructional strategies that address these statements, stateside and overseas instructors of Arabic may reduce the amount of time necessary to create lessons, develop programs, and train teachers. Since most overseas institutions offer pre-employment workshops for instructors, some of these common beliefs can be addressed in this forum. Moreover, instructors may consider designing action research with their counterparts of Arabic to test variations in materials or learning strategies with students.

Implications

The results from these students and their teachers of Arabic and the educational policies of the host country suggest several implications for improved instructional and curricular design for the YLC and ALIF programs. Several educational frameworks may help to clarify the origins of some of the student-teacher mismatches.

Public policy in education. U.S. educators list five issues of educational policy: accountability, efficiency, excellence, choice, and equity.

In the case of the privately-owned YLC, accountability is not a major concern. Since the Yemeni Ministry of Education is not involved in curriculum, instruction, or in inspecting housing arrangements, the YLC staff have flexibility in program design. In contrast, the USIS does require some annual reports as part of the U.S. government overseas programs. Both the ALIF and the American Language Center (ALC) directors prepare the report. U.S. officials regularly visit ALIF/ALC when in Fez.

Both institutes have an efficient system for sorting and placing students into an appropriate location. At the YLC, teachers proctor an oral and written placement exam the first day. The ALIF staff administer a written or oral exam. Each program provide institutional identification cards, a snack bar, and library card for students and facilitate housing arrangements.

Instructional and curricular excellence is a concern for both institutions. The YLC has increasing number of competitors; some directors are actually former YLC teachers. Consequently, the YLC tries to meet the academic needs of students with remedial and advanced-level tutorials. Likewise the ALIF staff must compete with numerous Arabic programs in Morocco. Most Moroccan programs are affiliate with U.S. and U.K. universities

and thus must utilize an evaluative instrument satisfactory to all affiliates (Gordon, 1987).[10]

The increased number of overseas Arabic programs provide a wide choice for teachers. Some programs provide special amenities for teachers such as lunches to reduce the commute time for the mid-day meal. Teachers may specialize in level of instruction and types of extra-curricular activities with students. Other programs may pay teachers in dollars rather than local currency. ALIF has a large English-language collection which was donated by USIS. At the YLC, teachers may accompany students on one-day excursions and thus are able to practice their English.

Equity is a problem in both countries. Islamic tradition combined with fundamentalism limits the interaction that the female teachers may have with male teachers and students (Laubscher, 1994). Yemeni teachers may not feel comfortable in inviting female students to a daily qat chew as they may with male students. The few female teachers may feel overwhelmed by so many female students seeking invitations to qat chews, bath houses, and weddings. Travel for female teachers and students in Yemen is sometimes difficult since traditionally unmarried men and women cannot sit on the same seat or bench in public transportation. Finally, female teachers may not feel welcome at weekly staff meetings or comfortable sharing offices with male teachers or staff. In Morocco, female teachers have less social and cultural restrictions than do their counterparts in Yemen.

Policy instruments of education. Governments can implement educational policy by four methods: mandates, incentives, capacity building, and systemic change.

The YLC receives few directives from the Ministry of Education concerning administration, instruction, or curriculum. In contrast, the ALIF staff as a former appendage of USIS-Rabat does have certain duties to maintain. As an incentive, the director and the ALC director receive a housing allowance and a five-year contract. This incentive is intended to bring consistency to the program. However, the major instrument for program changes is in capacity building. Training Moroccan teachers in language pedagogy and in educating U.S. citizens in Arabic language and culture. Perhaps, USIS administrators view ALIF programs as a venue for systemic change.

Purpose of education. A third framework focuses on the purpose of education. In Yemen, the Ministry of Education appears to stress nation building and citizenship since the country has been unified since 1991. However, teachers and staff at the YLC generally comprise northerners who were educated at the University of Sana'a. In essence, the purpose of the YLC seems to be the development of the Sana'a economy. Students pay in hard currency for tuition and housing. The center is a business; teachers who receive good student evaluations stay and those who do not leave. The director may also ascribe to self-realization for students since satisfied students are the best advertisement of the YLC.

In contrast, the teachers and administration at ALIF with nation building and the development of a cognitive being. Administrators recruit teachers from a variety of regions including some teachers from the U.S. The nation building occurs for Moroccans familiar with U.S. education and society and also for Americans to become proficient in Arabic for economic and political security. Economic development is less of a purpose since Morocco has a good economy and trade agreements with the U.S. ALIF staff facilitate student housing arrangements for homestays, apartments, or the "villa." But they receive money only for the latter which can house about 15 students.

In summary, these frameworks help to explain the host countries educational policy. These teachers tend to view educational legitimacy through the traditional imaam/president and king while their U.S. students operate under a constitutional legitimacy. Administration at the YLC and ALIF seems to have political hierarchical with a centralized power in the Ministry of Education or the USIS where the U.S. students may expect a professional hierarchy. The political cultures lean to being traditional as opposed to U.S. being more individualistic. Political groups in Sana'a and Fez do hold sway over the institutions' operations by leasing facilities and providing municipal services.

With a joint effort by students, teachers, authors, and administrators, language programs around the world can improve teaching effectiveness so that stateside students of Arabic can

attain an advanced or superior level of proficiency and become lifelong Arabic speakers. To ameliorate the linkages, U.S. programs might make a concerted effort to share teaching materials (paper and electronic), to provide language pedagogical journals, to develop action research projects, and to arrange for teacher exchanges. In addition, stateside universities could provide computers and generators for extended overseas tutoring.

Limitations

Several limitations in this study need mentioning. First, since the students were at different levels of language instruction, the sample was not homogenous. Second, the sample size was small which underscores the difficulty of conducting quantitative research concerning students and teachers of Arabic. Third, the data were not collected at the same time. In the future, a researcher might design a study to compare responses from students and their teachers of LCTLs in more prosperous countries.

Conclusions

Since U.S. linguists classify Arabic as a "most" difficult language for speakers of English, often trips to countries where Arabic is spoken are designed to add language contact time and cultural exposure. In general, results from this study may be seen as support for stateside administrators of overseas Arabic programs to carefully select programs with the target-language

country' educational tradition in mind. Moreover, the 14 statements receiving similar teacher and student responses (30%) may be the ones that stateside and overseas administrators could address by collaborating on pre-departure language activities and re-entry strategies.

With this sample of students and their teachers of Arabic, this study demonstrates that differences do exist in beliefs between students and teachers. Both teachers and students must identify, organize, and exploit the positive beliefs held by students about learning a language. Such knowledge may help to determine or modify course content, lesson sequence, teaching methods and materials, and even articulation across levels of instruction. In addition, this knowledge of beliefs may make it possible for teachers to create a mode of instruction in which stateside students' needs and goals are satisfied in the context of the overseas country. Arabic acquisition may now be understood in terms of the beliefs that students and teachers have about their lessons, their control over the curriculum, their sense of progress in learning or teaching Arabic, and their understanding for cultural meanings.

Knowledge of the strength of these beliefs is crucial for teachers (Tedick & Walker 1994), for textbook writers (Amayreh 1984), and for curriculum developers if they are to meet students' goals and teacher expectations in overseas foreign language study.

Notes

1. According to staff at the Foreign Language Institute, Defense Language Institute, and the Educational Testing Service, the amount of time necessary for an adult to acquire an advanced level proficiency in Arabic is more than 1300 class hours. At post-secondary institutions, students cannot acquire such a proficiency with three or four academic years of instruction. Additional instruction is necessary.

2. ALIF, P.O. Box 2136, Fez 30000, Morocco
Director: Kenneth Honerkamp [David Amster - ALC]
tel. (212/5) 624850 fax (212/5) 93 1608 <alif@mbox.azure.net>
http://www.azure.net/alif
Affiliation: University of Florida, Washington University, Dartmouth College, Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange, University of Leeds, National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations.

3. YLC, P.O. Box 16961, Sana'a, Yemen
Director - Sabri Saleem
tel. (967/1) 285-125 fax (967/1) 289-249 <language@y.net.ye>
Affiliations: University of Leeds, University of Durham, University of Edinburgh, Cornell University, American Institute for Yemeni Studies.
U.S. Information Office, P.O. Box 2259, Elk Grove, CA 95624
tel. (916) 685-7241 <ylcint@ylcint.com>
http://www.ylcint.com

4. Ten of the ALIF student respondents were part of the National Council for U.S.-Arab Relations. Most of the participants were graduate students or teachers of Arabic studies at small colleges.

5. In Yemen, the author wrote short summaries of Yemeni novels and short stories. [see: Jayyusi, S.K. (1988). *Literature of modern Arabia*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.] Few of the instructors were familiar with the authors and none had read the summarized works.

6. Other than English, French and German are offered through Embassy programs in Sana'a. The universities have departments which offer beginning courses. During the 1960s in southern Yemen, Russian was available.

7. ALC (USIS) has schools in Rabat, Casablanca, Fez, Marrakesh, Tangier, Tetouan, and Kenitra. One of the ALIF teachers is on the local arrangement committee for the African Literature Association meeting to be held in Fez in March, 1999. [Edris Makward (University of Wisconsin) is a co-chair.]

8. Several of the ALIF teachers wrote and published novels in Arabic. ALIF teachers incorporated some of their articles printed in journals and newspapers as sources for cultural discussions.

9. In 1998, the Fulbright Commission (USIS/USED) offered 9 awards for research and teaching in Morocco as compared to 2 awards in Yemen.

10. Language/cultural programs exist at Mohammed V University (Rabat) - University of Wisconsin, Tangier - Georgetown University, and Meknes - University of Texas, Al-Akhawayn University (Ifrane) - Binghamton University.

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Appendix - A

Comparison of Programs

	ALIF - MOROCCO	YLC - YEMEN
established	1983	1989
location	religion/educational capital	political/religious capital
funding	USIS (public)	private
director	Abdul Haddi (Ph.D. candidate Arabic Literature)	Sabri Saleem (B.S. Law)
teachers	salaried + benefits	hourly, no benefits
teachers' meet	yes (+ ESL teachers)	yes (Thursday pm)
textbooks	U.S., Arab League	U.S., Arab League, U.K.
supplementary materials	advanced level-newspaper articles, book chapters	video - Arabic Sesame Street, TV programs
placement	written	oral, written
final exam	written	written
Arabic	MSA + Maghrebi	MSA + Yemeni
instructional levels	5	9
weeks/prog.	6	10
hours/day	4	4
meals available	yes week days	no, snacks + tea
library	large collection	small collection
culture lectures	yes upon demand (English)	yes (English)
excursions	limited (tour old city) [UF-optional trip to southern Morocco, at cost. NCUSAR-several weekend trips during program.]	every 5 weeks, one day-trip (countryside)
homework	yes	limited

	ALIF - MOROCCO	YLC - YEMEN
cost	$905 tuition	$1800 tuition/housing
U.S. affiliate	Univ. of Florida - Aida Bamia	Washington Univ. - Peter Heath
housing	homestays, apartment, ALIF villa	YLC dormitories

Appendix B

BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING
(KRI)

(1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Neutral (4) Disagree (5) Strongly disagree

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.

2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.

3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.

4. The language I am trying to learn is:
Very Diff Difficult Medium Diff Easy Very Easy

5. The language I am trying to learn is structured in the same way as English.

6. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.

7. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.

8. It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.

9. You should not say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.

10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.

11. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.

12. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.

13. It is okay to guess if you do not know a word in the foreign language.

14. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent?
< yr 1-2 yrs 3-5 yrs 5-10 yrs Not possible

15. I have a foreign language aptitude.

16. Learning a foreign language mostly a matter of learning many new vocabulary words.

17. It is important to repeat and practice often.

18. I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.

19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.

20. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a many of grammar rules.

21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.

22. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.

23. If I speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.

24. If is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.

25. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.

26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English.

27. If I learn to speak this language very well it will help me get a good job.

28. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.

29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.

30. Americans think that it is important to speak a foreign language.

31. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.

32. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.

33. Americans are good at learning foreign languages.

34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

35. In order to read something in a foreign language, you have to know all the words.

36. In order to listen to something in a foreign language, you have to know all the words.

37. It is easier to read and understand (listen) in this language than it is to speak and write in it.

I am interested in studying this language....

38. because I have distant ancestors who spoke this language.

39. because it will be helpful to me professionally.

40. because I am interested in the culture of the people(s) who speak this language.

41. because I am interested in the politics and/or economics of the country (countries) where this language is spoken.

42. because I need to fulfill a foreign language requirement for graduation.

43. to qualify for a fellowship or some kind of funding for my education.

44. because I have friends or relatives who speak it.

45. because the quality of instruction in this language is excellent.

46. because I plan to travel to a country where this language is spoken.

47. My most important goal in studying this language is to develop the ability to:

read/write easy formal superior native

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